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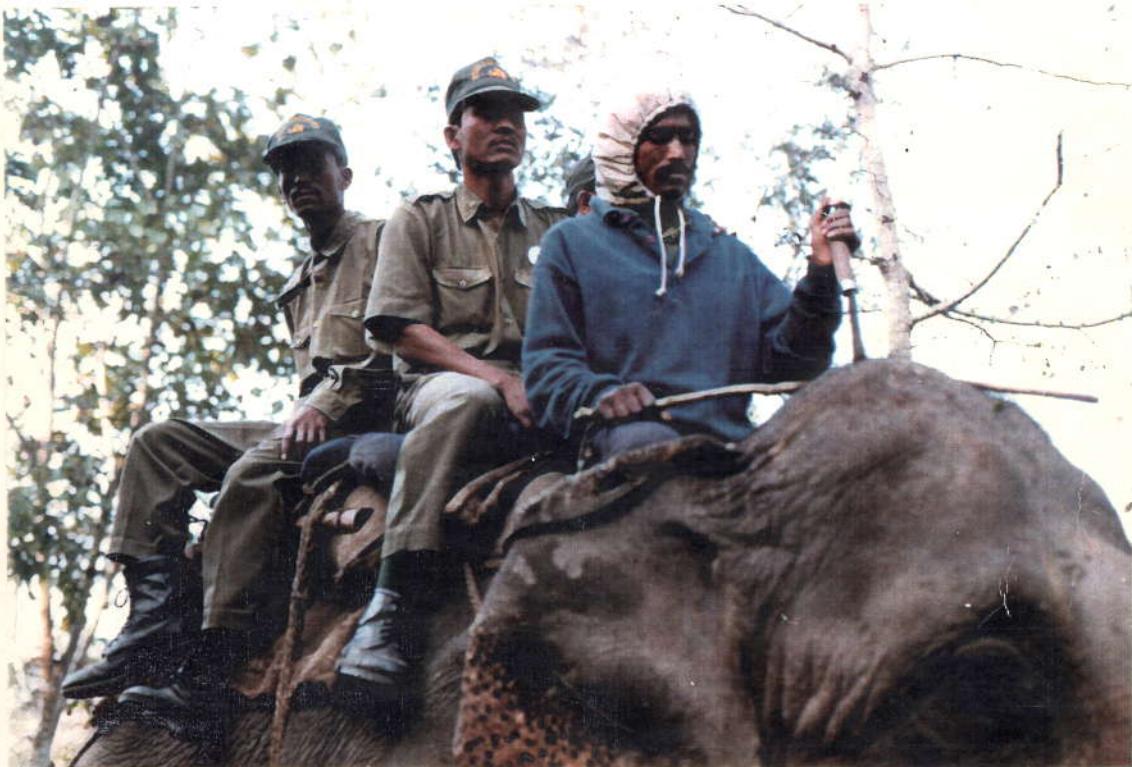
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Report Series, # 35

**Anti-Poaching Operations:
A Report on Anti-Poaching Operations
in
RBNP, RCNP, PWR, SWR
(1992 - 1998)**



Prepared by
dekyl chungyalpa
Intern, WWF Nepal Program

June 1998

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dekyal chungyalpa

Intern, WWF Nepal Program

WWF Nepal Program
Gha 2-332, Lal Durbar
GPO Box 7660
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 421990/ 421810
Fax: 410137
Email: mns@wwf.mos.com.np

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PREFACE

The World Wildlife Fund Nepal Program is pleased to present this evaluative report on the anti-poaching operations that are set in Nepal's wildlife parks and reserves. The report draws on information regarding anti-poaching operations from four wildlife protection areas: Royal Bardia National Park, Royal Chitwan national Park, Parsa Wildlife Reserve and Royal Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve. All information from RBNP and RCNP cover the years from 1992 to 1998 whereas information about poaching related incidents in Parsa and Suklaphanta is pertinent only to 1997/98.

WWF Nepal Program has been providing financial support for all anti-poaching units in Nepal by covering costs for vehicle maintenance, fuel, field gear and incentive packages for park staff. This report is an attempt on WWF's part to improve the over-all efficiency of anti-poaching operations and it reflects WWF's commitment to anti-poaching programs.

While Nepal has a highly successful record in the field of wildlife conservation, the problem of poaching has not abated in the last few years. Furthermore, the problem of wildlife trafficking has globally accelerated due to increasing consumer demand and higher prices. In order for Nepal to maintain its biodiversity and protect its wildlife, it must constantly evaluate the anti-poaching and anti-trafficking operations. The operations will be considered successful if they serve as deterrents as well as punishments.

This report serves as a useful synopsis on the state of anti-poaching operations in Nepal. WWF welcomes feedback from all interested parties.

Mingma Norbu Sherpa

Country Representative
WWF Nepal Program
Kathmandu, Nepal

I. INTRODUCTION

Nepal is known as one of the success stories in the field of wildlife conservation. There are sixteen national parks, wildlife reserves and protected areas within its boundaries. The 16 different protected areas are composed of 8 national parks, 4 wildlife reserves, 1 hunting reserve and 3 conservation areas all of which covers about 15 % of Nepal's total land area. The 1973 National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act with amendments in 1975 and 1983 was further amended in 1994 to incorporate buffer zone policy which provides 30 to 50% of the total park revenue for the community development in the buffer zone.

Most of these reserves and parks came into being in the mid seventies. Until then, they existed as private amusements for the royal families, visiting dignitaries and tourists. Chitwan itself was exclusively managed as a hunting reserve for the Rana Prime Ministers and their guests until 1950. In 1963, the area south of Rapti was demarcated as a rhinoceros sanctuary and in 1973, it became the first National Park to preserve the unique eco-system of the area. Bardia which is in the south-western lowlands was originally established as a Royal Hunting Reserve. The area was reclassified and gazetted as Royal Bardia Wildlife Reserve in 1976. In 1984, it was extended to include Babai valley and later classified as the Royal Bardia National Park. RBNP is the largest protected area in the lowland Terai, and encompasses a total area of 968 sq. km.

Since 1990, Nepal has experienced increased trade in wildlife products in spite of strict legislation that penalizes the traders and offenders up to Rs100,000 (US\$1,500) and 15 years of imprisonment, or both. Reacting to the increased number of poaching incidents and trade in wildlife products in the early 90s, WWF and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) set up an institutional program to prevent poaching. With funding from the MacArthur Foundation, WWF established anti-poaching units in Royal Chitwan National Park and Royal Bardia National Park. In 1995, WWF boosted its ongoing support to this program and initiated a range of activities with an additional grant of US \$60,000 from WWF-Netherlands.

II. THE POACHING PROBLEM

i. Poaching and its Causes

The international trade of wildlife species is just as illegal and almost as profitable as the international narcotics trade. In fact, the trafficking of wildlife species is known to be second only to the trafficking of drugs. The value of a rhino horn on the market would come up to US \$ 30,000 and an entire tiger skeleton is priceless. On average, the dealer receives approximately US \$20,000/ kg of rhino horn and sometimes as much as US \$10, 000/ kg of tiger bone.¹ The actual poacher usually gets to see only about 1 % of the final profit.

The majority of wildlife species on the endangered list have been put there due to mankind's self interest and on the other hand, mankind's lack of interest. The entire world population of the tiger is on a sharp decline due to Traditional Chinese Medicine which holds that tiger parts ranging from whiskers all the way to testes can heal anything from manic depression to impotence.² The rhino has been hunted for years for the supposed aphrodisiac qualities within its horn and for the status given to Middle Eastern men when they carry "jambijjas",

¹ Ingham, John. "Armed, Dangerous and on an Elephant", The Express. April 12, 1998.

² WWF India. Tiger Conservation and Strategy, July 1996.

ceremonial daggers made of rhino horn³. Most felines, canines, lupines and reptiles are now endangered due to the use of their furs and skins as fashion accessories. In short, one of the biggest threats to wildlife species is that of mankind's attitude of self-interest and self-service towards Nature.



Fish blown out of river by Poachers, RBNP

On the other hand, the lack of interest demonstrated by most of the poorer people who simply try to live day to day has also been detrimental for wildlife populations. The average poacher in Nepal is a local villager who earns many times more than a year's income from the yield of one poaching incident. He has little understanding of the long term implications of decrease in wildlife populations. The solution to the problems of poverty that he and his family face is right across the fence; inside the boundaries of a wildlife reserve or national park. In many cases, the villagers live on a bare subsistence level and look to the reserve or park for additional income by gathering fodder for their animals or harvesting *kurilo* (asparagus) and of course, by poaching.



Poacher with grandchildren arrested at RBNP

³ WWF, Position Statement for CITES, 9-20 June 1997, p. 12.

It is this tragic combination of poverty, lack of education and the demand oriented international market that leads to the problem of poaching in wildlife sanctuaries. Often, poaching is perceived as an isolated incident. In actuality, there is an intricate relationship involving middlemen, wildlife product dealers, traders and finally the consumers. The traders and dealers tempt local villagers with large sums of money for the carcass of a tiger or rhino. These poachers often hoard wildlife products like tiger bones and rhino horns for a couple of years so that they are not detected immediately by the anti-poaching units. Until there is a major change in the attitude of the consumer, poaching and trafficking of wildlife will always be a large threat to endangered wildlife species.

ii. Poaching Methods

The majority of poachers come from local ethnic communities. The park and reserve records show that the usual size of a poaching party is limited to two or three if they plan to shoot their prey. However, the numbers are increased to five or six if they wish to snare a rhino since that usually requires pit digging. There are several other methods used to kill the rhinoceros. In the case of pits, a rectangular pit is dug during the night in the middle of a path that the rhino is known to use. Poachers also use poison by placing it on maize and pumpkin patches that are visited regularly by the rhinoceros. A less common method is that of suspending wire nooses and heavy spears on trees. Automatic rifles are also used but is not common in the case of the rhinoceros.

Poaching records show that the prime target for the poachers is the one-horned rhinoceros followed by the spotted deer, wild boar and then the tiger. While the rhinoceros and the tiger are killed for the value of their horn and bones, the deer and the boars serve to provide meat for the local people.



One-horned Rhino seen in RCNP

Poaching activities are known to increase during a gap between anti-poaching operations or during a time when most anti-poaching staff go on leave. According to the park records, 11 out of 21 poaching incidents in Chitwan during the time period between 1992 and 1996 occurred between July and October which is the monsoon period followed by the Dasain

arrest of poachers and dealers in wildlife species and their part. Since the outset of the anti-poaching system, WWF has provided financial support for vehicle maintenance, fuel, field gear and incentive packages for the Park staff.

The anti-poaching unit in the Royal Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve is actually a Tiger Protection Unit which serves to control tiger poaching activities and to improve the flow of inside information. The tiger protection unit is made up of 10 persons which includes the informant. The anti-poaching methods in RSWR rely mostly on the informants who constantly survey the villages adjacent to the tiger habitats and relay updated information to the APU. RSWR supports over 30 Royal Bengal Tigers, helped by the fact that the Reserve contains the largest herd of Swamp Deer in the world.



Tiger-skin and tiger-bones captured by APU

WWF initiated two Anti-Poaching Units in Parsa Wildlife Reserve early this year (January 1998) in order to deter poaching of animals and the smuggling of timber. PWR is quite rich in vegetation with a wide variety of different tree species and is also home to the Asiatic Elephant, the Tiger, the Bear, Common Leopard, Blue Bull, Four-horned Antelope and the Indian Python. Furthermore, the Reserve is attached to Royal Chitwan National Park in the west which allows for the inter-border migration of the Rhinoceros. The Anti-Poaching Unit works closely with the Protection Unit of the Army. When the APU finds out any covert information regarding poaching or trafficking plans or when they sight something suspicious, they inform the Protection Unit. However, due to the various rivers and streams from the Chure Hills, the poachers are able to use unpredictable escape routes at night.

At present, WWF supports 12 APUs; 2 in Parsa Wildlife Reserve, 7 in Royal Chitwan National Park, 2 in Royal Bardia National Park, 1 Tiger Protection Unit in Royal Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve, 1 in Nawalparasi District and 1 in Chitwan District. The latter two APUs are run by District Forest Offices.

Relevant Authorities

Park / Reserve	Warden	Phone Number
Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve	Singh, Jagannath	025-21488
Parsa Wildlife Reserve	Yadav, Ram Prit	053-20246
Royal Bardia Wildlife Reserve	Shrestha, Puran Bhakta	084-29712
Royal Chitwan National Park	Upadhyay, Gopal Prasad	056- 21932
Royal Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve	Thagunna, Shersing	099-21321

[Table No. 2]

iv. Methods of Anti-Poaching Units

According to the DNPWC, a successful anti-poaching operation is made up of these integral factors:

- **Information Gathering**
Since poaching rarely occurs without the help of local villagers who are familiar with the national parks and wildlife reserves, it is imperative that the anti-poaching unit include incentives for informants. The informants work in the villages surrounding the park or reserve and supply the APU with the information that they have uncovered which allows the APU to surprise the poachers or dealers and traders. This process has proved to be very cost effective.
- **Patrolling**
While the presence of an APU often serves to deter a poaching group in remote areas, patrolling also often allows the APU to reach the scene of crime quickly.
- **Coordination**
Since the park staff are not armed, it is necessary that an APU include armed protection. Coordination with Royal Nepal Army stationed as protection units inside the protected areas, police and the District forest office is a must. Furthermore, the dealers and the traders operate mostly outside the protected areas where the APU must work along with the police and the District forest office.
- **Legal Procedure**
After all necessary investigations are conducted, the offenders must go through the legal procedure until the verdict is pronounced. A poacher can be sentenced 5 to 15 years imprisonment by the Department of National Parks.
- **Reward and Punishment**
The combination of providing incentives for villagers to reveal information and punishing those who are involved in poaching and other illegal activities has turned out to be effective. Awards like the Abraham Conservation Award which is maintained by the WWF Nepal Program have served to boost the morale of the front-line park officials who often risk their lives in their line of duty.
- **Awareness Program**
In most cases, the local community lacks environmental education and has little sense of responsibility towards the wildlife in the nearby park or reserve. Developing

III. QUANTITATIVE INFORMATION

i. Structure of Anti-Poaching Units

Structure of Anti-Poaching Units

Park	Component of APU	# of Component	Park	Component of APU	# of Component
RBNP	APU 1		RCNP	APU 4 (Madi)	
	Leader	1		Game Scout	3
	Senior Game Scout	1		Local Employees	2
	Game Scout	4		Bote	1
	Informant	1		Informant	1
	APU 2			APU 5 (Tikauli)	
	Leader	1		Leader	1
	Senior Game Scout	1		Constables	5
	Game Scout	4		Local Employees	2
	Informant	1		Informant	1
	APU 3			APU 6 (Kawasoti)	
	Leader	1		Ranger	1
	Senior Game Scout	1		Constables	5
	Game Scout	4		Local APU member	2
	Informant	1		local Informant	1
			Jan/98	APU 7 (Tamaspur)	
			RSWR	Tiger Protection Unit	
RCNP	APU 1 (Khagendra Mall)			Ranger	1
	Game Scout	5		Game Scout	5
	Elephant Staff	2		Elephant Staff	3
	Local Employee	2		Informant	1
	Bote	1			
	Informant	1	PWR	APU 1 (Adha Bar Unit)	
				Game Scout	5
	APU 2 (Padampur)			Elephant Staff	3
	Game Scout	3		Local Employee	2
	Elephant Staff	2		Informant	1
	Local Employee	2			
	Bote	1		APU 2 (Pratapar Unit)	
	Informant	1		Game Scout	5
				Elephant Staff	3
	APU 3 (Piprahar)			Local Employee	2
	Game Scout	3		Informant	1
	Elephant Staff	2			
	Local Employees	2			
	Bote	1			
	Informant	1			

[Table No. 3]

awareness programs that the local villagers can relate to and learn from are necessary for long term conservation of wildlife species.

- **Reporting**

The final goal of an anti-poaching operation is to inform and educate the public regarding the present status of the wildlife species and the poaching activities that have occurred. Reporting on anti-poaching activities is as important as the anti-poaching operation itself. Reporting reveals the trends in poaching and other related illegal dealings.

ii. Past Poaching Incidents

Poaching Incidences (1992 - June 1998)⁴

Date	Case	Location	Remarks	Park
21.6.92	Arrested with tiger bones	-		RCNP
14.12.92	Encounter with armed groups	Sanoshree	Poacher escaped	RBNP
15.12.92	Sound of gunfire	Ratamate	Poacher escaped	RBNP
29.12.92	Towchain found	Sanoshree	Poacher escaped	RBNP
4.1.93	Dead rhino seen	Outside NP	Poacher escaped	RBNP
7.1.93	With rhino parts	-		RCNP
7.1.93	Selling rhino parts	-		RCNP
11.1.93	Dead rhino seen (horn removed)	Guthi		RBNP
24.1.93	Dead Sambar seen	Khairbhaddi	Poacher escaped	RBNP
23.2.93	Dead Sambar seen	Ramuwapur	5 poachers captured	RBNP
31.3.93	4 poachers with guns	Chisapani	Captured	RBNP
7.4.93	One gun confiscated	Lalmati		RBNP
11.4.93	Towchain found	Guthi		RBNP
5.5.93	Encounter with armed group	Guthi	1 gun, 9 bullets confiscated	RBNP
7.5.93	Encounter with armed group	Guthi	1 gun, 8 bullets confiscated	RBNP
7.5.93	Dead rhino seen (horn removed)	Outside NP		RBNP
6.6.93	Encounter with armed group	Guthi	Poachers escaped	RBNP
8.6.93	Several pitfalls seen	Chitalaya		RBNP
21.6.93	Selling rhino parts	-	Fined Rs. 500	RCNP
23.7.93	Attempted poaching of rhino	Padmapur		RCNP
10.11.93	Dead rhino seen (horn & nails removed)	Dandagaun		RBNP
24.11.93	Poachers captured	Taratal	6 poachers captured	RBNP
10.12.93	Poaching of Rhino	-		RCNP
24.12.93	Dead Blue Bull seen	Manau	9 poachers captured	RBNP
30.12.93	Encounter with armed groups	Kalinala	Poacher escaped	RBNP
1.5.94	Encounter with armed groups	Babyochaur	Poacher escaped	RBNP
9.6.94	Encounter with armed groups	West to Hattisar	Poacher escaped	RBNP
2.8.94	Poaching of rhino	-		RCNP
12.8.94	Encounter with armed groups	Guthi	1 dead Chital found	RBNP
14.8.94	Encounter with armed groups	West to Hattisar	Poacher escaped	RBNP
23.8.94	Encounter with armed groups	Guthi	Poacher captured	RBNP
5.11.94	Encounter with armed groups	Sanoshree	Poacher escaped	RBNP
25.12.94	Possession of rhino horn	-		RCNP
10.2.95	Possession of tiger bones	-		RCNP
25.3.95	Possession of tiger & leopard skin	-		RCNP
11.4.95	1 gun confiscated	Lalmati	Poacher escaped	RBNP
12.5.95	Possession of rhino horn	-		RCNP
16.5.95	Dead bluebell seen	Manau	13 poachers captured	RBNP
6.7.95	Encounter with armed groups	Guthi	Poacher captured	RBNP
5.9.95	Encounter with armed group	Budhinata	1 gun, 21 bullets confiscated	RBNP
19.10.95	Possession of tiger bones	-		RCNP
1.11.95	Possession of tiger bones	-		RCNP

⁴ All information regarding Parsa Wildlife Reserve and Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve is pertinent only to 1997 and 1998.

24.11.95	1 poacher killed	Khairbhaddi	1 gun, 21 bullets confiscated	RBNP
10.12.95	Possession of tiger skin	-		RCNP
15.12.95	Possession of rhino horn	-		RCNP
20.2.96	3 rounds of gunshots heard. Sambar dry meat seized at the spot	Ghopte	Poachers escaped	RBNP
22.2.96	One chital found dead in trap	Near Motipur Village		RBNP
24.2.96	Poacher captured with 12 tow chains	Lalmati	1 caught, 5 escaped	RBNP
17.3.96	3 poachers seen with guns	Khair Bhaddi	Poachers escaped	RBNP
1.4.96	Fish poisoning	Khauraha river	Poacher could not be identified	RBNP
6.4.96	2 honey extractors captured	Lalmati	Extractors involved with forest fires	RBNP
28.4.96	One mahajal (large fishing net 110m long 7-3m wide), 1 fishing net, 5 fishing ropes and 1 boat confiscated	-		RBNP
3.5.96	1 bullet cover found	Bagaura Phanta		RBNP
3.5.96	8 honey extractors captured	Near Ramuwapur	Extractors involved with forest fires	RBNP
11.5.96	1 poacher captured with fishing net	Karanti Chisapani		RBNP
27.5.96	Fish poisoning	Khauraha near Betani	Poachers could not be identified	RBNP
3.6.96	5 women captured	Khauraha Phanta	Women cutting grass illegally	RBNP
4.6.96	45 persons captured	Sainbar	Persons collecting firewood	RBNP
18.6.96	Attempted poaching of rhino [Poison placed on corncob]	Pyaridhap plantation area outside Khagendra Malli	No arrest made	RCNP
28.6.96	Attempted poaching of rhino [Poison bait discovered]	Lakal Chat east of Amrite Post	Poisoned bait sent to RONAST for examination	RCNP
27.7.96	5 local women with 6 baby wild boars arrested	Bhurigaun		RBNP
5.7.96	12 livestock grazing were rounded up	Manu area		RBNP
5.7.96	2 persons spotted fishing	Babai river	Poachers could not be captured due to flooded river	RBNP
13.7.96	Possession of 12.5 kg tiger bones	Resident of Dumbikas		RCNP
19.7.96	7 livestock grazing were rounded up	Betani Phanta		RBNP
7.96	Trying to sell rhino hooves	Resident of Chainpur VDC Chitwan	Arrested by Tikauli APU	RCNP
8.8.96	Gunshots heard	Chitalaya	Poachers escaped	RBNP
9.8.96	Seven poachers with guns seen	Near Danavtal	Poachers escaped	RBNP
12.8.96	Encounter with armed group - one poacher, Prem Bahadur Buda killed, one, Rabilal Puri injured	Karaliya Khola, north of babai bridge	One poacher was killed and one injured.	RBNP
1.9.96	Footprints of poachers seen	Ambasa Khola		RBNP
5.9.96	Gunshots heard	Sanosri	Poachers escaped	RBNP
6.9.96	Poisoned fish seen	Babai river, South of Guthi Post	Poachers could not be identified	RBNP
10.9.96	Gunshots heard	Thulosri		RBNP
10.9.96	Possession of 15 kg tiger bones	Dahakhani 8		RCNP
11.9.96	Gunshots heard and sambar skin retrieved	Thulosri	Poachers escaped	RBNP
11.9.96	Poacher caught with timber from NP area	Sainbar	Poacher illegally carrying timber	RBNP
20.9.96	One wild boar killed in road accident	Tamuapu	Bus driver taken to	RBNP

			custody	
20 - 27.9.96	One rhinoceros strayed out of Babai valley and across Indian border	Kandra Forest, near Taratal	Monitored by APU and Indian District Forest Officers closely	RBNP
14. 10.96	Gunshots heard	Ghoptay Aap	Poachers escaped	RBNP
16.10.96	Footprints of poachers spotted	Sanosri		RBNP
20.10.96	Smoke from poacher's camp detected	Manamakandu	Poachers had escaped when APU got there	RBNP
27.10.96	Possession of poison intended to be used to kill wild animal	Arrested in Harkatta forest		RCNP
2.11.96	Foot prints of poachers spotted	Dhanuse	Poachers escaped	RBNP
18.11.96	Gunshots heard	Shivapur		RBNP
28.11.96	Gunshots heard	Dalla forest (Buffer Zone)	Poachers escaped	RBNP
17.12.96	Dead Nilgai found	Gola	The Nilgai bore gunshot wounds	RBNP
24.12.96	One orphaned Chital babyu was found	Motipur post		RBNP
26.12.96	Shares found	Khara area of Motipur Post		RBNP
10.6.97	Kamal Bagale was arrested for killing a Sambar	resident of Ward 5, Padampur V.D.C.	Poacher caught with meat	RCNP
21.6.97	One person, Rajkumar Shrestha was caught while cutting Simal timber	Kawasoti, Nawalparasi	Arrested	RCNP
25.6.97	Bir Bahadur Lama from was caught while cutting a Saal tree	Gitanagar 5	Arrested in Buffer Zone Area	RCNP
12.7.97	6kg of tiger-bone, tiger-skin and 2 nails were seized	Border of Patthani & Gitanagar	Trafficker escaped. Investigation underway	RCNP
Btwn. June- Aug	Samundra Bahadur, Raju Bote arrested for poisoning and killing a tiger	Imelia Ghol, Madi Area	Both were arrested	RCNP
Btwn. June- Aug	6 persons from Aguali arrested on charge poisoning fish	Narayani river	All poachers arrested	RCNP
14.8. 97	3 poachers caught w/ 53 ft- long iron tow chain for rhinoceros.		Poachers arrested	RCNP
18. 9.97	Rhino carcass found with valuable parts intact	Chamka	Poachers escaped	RCNP
18.10.97	Timber smugglers caught - one killed, others escaped	Between Nirmalbasti and Gadua	One killed, others escaped	PWR
24.10.97	3 persons found with 14 kg of 500g of tiger-bone.	Dumkibas Ward No. 6	Traffickers arrested	RCNP
4.12.97	Seven sacks of Ganja (marijuana) seized	Near Charmaiya Post	Offenders escaped	PWR
27.12.97	APU confiscated 2 guns from poachers	Inside Reserve	Poachers escaped	PWR
17.1.98	2 persons arrested for killing a deer	Padampur Village Ward 1	Poachers arrested	RCNP
31.1.98	Padampur APU found tiger carcass	Sahapur River	Investigation underway	RCNP
9.2.98	Man Bahadur Magar was arrested with one adult leopard skin and one baby leopard skin	Chitwan Kairani	Poacher undergoing trial	RCNP
February 1998	Rhino shot dead by poachers	Chitwan	investigation underway	RCNP
16.3.98	6 persons arrested cutting timber	Kathar VDC Ward No 3	All arrested	RCNP
Present	Dead Leopard found	Bufferzone at Simra, Ward 2	Investigations are underway	RCNP

Source : DNPWC anti-poaching reports [Table No. 4]

iii. Decisions

Anti-Poaching Unit Review Meeting 18 March 1998

While APU activities have served effectively in controlling poaching of wildlife, the organizations concerned decided to review the APU program early this year. A meeting was held regarding the APU program, its reporting and communication system and the incentives and salary scales that would make APU operations more effective. In this respect, DNPWC hosted a review meeting on March 18, 1998 at the office of the Director General, Dr. U. R. Sharma..

Participants in Review Meeting

Participants	Designation	Projects/ Programs
Bhuju, Ukes	<i>Funding Organization</i>	WWF Nepal
Chapagain, Diwakar	CITES Unit	DNPWC
Manandhar, Laxmi	Planning Officer	DNPWC
McDougal, Charles	<i>Funding Organization</i>	ITNC
Pandey, Surya Bahadur	APU Field Activities Coordinator	DNPWC
Sharma, Uday R. Dr.	D.G.	DNPWC
Shrestha, Puran Bhakta	Chief Warden	RBNP
Thapa, Vashkar	<i>Funding Organization</i>	KMTNC
Upadhyay, Gopal Prasad	Chief Warden	RCNP

[Table No. 5]

A proposed strategy for anti-poaching units was submitted by Mr. Surya Bahadur Pandey and Mr. Ukes Bhuju following the meeting held with Dr. Uday Raj Sharma, DNPWC on March 18, 1998.

Draft Policy of Anti-Poaching Units 26th March, 1998

1. Depute regular staff to APU activities for full time. Their name, title must be provided to the Director General. Those staff should not be transferred frequently or should not be given extra development and maintenance works.
2. Pick up as much as Game Scouts who are interested to work in APU. If Game Scouts are not enough then recruit local members up to two for one APU team.
3. One APU team should incorporate the entire workforce of the post. As every one in the post will receive incentive, working spirit will be better than the existing system.
4. Recruit local members, informers and botes as per need (up to two for one APU) their names and addresses must be provided to the D.G. so that DNPWC can monitor their performance.
5. If elephants are needed for APU activities, the Chief Warden will allocate elephants up to two elephants for one APU team and their name and location must provide to the D.G.
6. The chief Warden, assistant wardens and supervisors must visit each APU team frequently and provide necessary advice for effective performance.

7. Royal Chitwan National Park, Royal Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve will have two field supervisors and one Head Quarter's coordinator, Parsa Wildlife Reserve will have one supervisor. Those supervisors are responsible to conduct APU operations in and around parks and reserves areas, specially conduct investigations, preparing monthly reports, coordinate with other organizations and arrest poachers.
8. When any APU staff is in home leave for more than a week, he will not receive incentive/ money. If anyone is taking more than a week long leave, the supervisor must replace him by another staff. These alternations must be clearly written in the monthly reports.
9. Recruitment of informers:
 - For RCNP informers will be a total of 4, two for RCNP (one for eastern sector and one for western sector), one for Chitwan District Forest Office and one for Nawalparasi District Forest Office.
 - For PWR informers will be a total of 2, one for the South sector and one for the North sector (informer who will work for the North sector will provide information to PWR APU and Makwanpur District APU).
 - For RSWR informer will be 2, one for Hirapur/ Champapur sector and one for Suklaphanta/ Beldadi Sector.
 - One additional informer will be recruited for RCNP, if KMTNC supports the mobile APU for the buffer zone area of Sauraha.
10. APU organization and operation system of Royal Bardia National Park seems satisfactory and incentive rates will be revised there also based on the standardized rates.
11. New incentive rates have been prepared jointly by the DNPWC and WWF. This incentive policy will be in effect as soon as it is approved by the Director General of the DNPWC and the WWF CR.

III. ANALYSIS

i. Report

The people constituting Anti-Poaching Units are grass-root level, low paid staff with few benefits and a high risk factor. Most of them form the protection force in the frontier of the parks, performing under risky and dangerous conditions. Especially since they themselves are unarmed, their courage should be noted while chasing armed poachers, patrolling at night and working undercover among smugglers and traffickers. Their service for the public and for the protection of wildlife is seldom noticed and they are given few incentives.

The local informants, also rarely recognized publicly for their performance play a vital role in anti-poaching operations. Often, the informants infiltrate poaching groups by asking around about easy ways to kill animals and safe ways to escape undetected from the park. Most locals are afraid of providing information about poachers since they fear reprisals and are unaware of the reward given for information that will lead to the capture of poachers. Unfortunately, remuneration is not offered to the informants on a regular basis.

The APU staff usually receives a regular salary of Rs. 2, 000 per month which is of subsistence level. Since incentives and compensations are not included in the Government budget, the APU members do not get adequate incentives. The Senior Game Scout at RCNP, did not receive full reimbursement for his medical bills which came up to Rs. 20,000 from his office. He was attacked by a sloth bear while patrolling the park in April 1997. All members should be guaranteed monetary incentives on top of their regular incentives for high-risk encounters, medical expenses for any accidents, compensation for their families in case of fatal accidents, field gear, cash awards for exceptional performances and should be publicly recognized for their work.

Anti-poaching units have been quite successful in locating poachers but have not been as successful in capturing them. While most encounters between the poachers and the APUs result in the confiscation of weapons, the poachers themselves are seldom apprehended. Looking at the numbers of encounters reported in Bardia and Chitwan since 1993, poachers escape more than half of the time [approximately, 60%]. There are many apparent reasons for this high number:

- **Low Manpower**

An average APU covers a range of a 5 kilometer radius which is quite inadequate considering that Chitwan Park itself is almost 100 kilometers wide. Unlike Chitwan which has 7 separate Anti-poaching units, most other protected areas have one or two. Due to their low numbers, the APUs do not patrol at night unless there is reliable evidence and information pointing to a poaching operation. The low numbers man-powering anti-poaching systems are the biggest problem facing the APUs. Due to this, an additional APU was formed in the Tamaspur area of Chitwan Park in January of 1998. More manpower is required in all parks to deter poaching and detect the individuals involved in the illegal trade of the endangered species and their parts.

- **Lack of Resources**

While WWF provides support to anti-poaching operations by paying for the field gear and vehicle maintenance, most APUs still require a lot more financial aid. APU scouts are limited due to the lack of communication sets and field gear for overnight

patrolling. While government budget covers the basic salary for scouts, it does not cover emergency operations that necessitate vehicles, long distance communication and local informants.

- **Geographic Landscape**

In many cases, the APUs hear the sounds of gunfire or detect smoke rising but find that the poachers have already made their getaway by the time they get there. The park areas are sometimes so remote that the APUs do not have easy access to them. Often, the poachers are able to make their escape after being detected during the time period required for the APU to reach them.

- **Poaching Coordination**

Most poachers work in groups ready to split up when escaping which helps to confuse the APUs. They also work fully armed and run under the cover of open fire when caught by the APUs. In many cases, the poachers work at night which ensures cover from the APU due to low visibility. Often, the poacher will have heard the vehicle or seen the headlights and will have long made his getaway by the time the APU gets there. In Bardia, the poachers seem to focus on areas that have the highest concentration of rhino and tiger populations which is the Babai Valley and the Karnali flood plains. They tend to target the rhinoceros due to the increased price of rhino horns in the market. They often merely remove the horn and leave the less valuable skin and nails.

- **Climate/ Weather**

During the Monsoon seasons, the lakes and rivers rise considerably and prevent accessibility to the other side. Fish poachers find it easy to escape during these months. The rain helps to obstruct visibility and slows down all operations. Flooding is a big problem in Bardia since it severely limits APU mobility. Since most poachers escape during this period, it is impossible to locate the area they belong to. However, captured record shows that people from Surkhet, Chisapani and Taratal are involved in most of the poaching incidences.

- **Local Assistance**

In many cases, the poachers are aided by or themselves are locals who live in villages adjacent or adjoining the protected area. This not only gives them familiarity of the geography within the park, it also gives them close and nearby hideouts, reducing their chances of getting caught.

On the whole, Anti-poaching Units are indispensable for the protection of wildlife species in protected areas. They not only create a deterrent by simply patrolling the areas but they also directly involve themselves by engaging in encounters with armed poachers. Often, they are able to uncover information leading to people who master-mind the poaching and trafficking operations.

ii. Recommendations

Since the major problem for anti-poaching operations involve the inability to cover all of the protected area, it is necessary to increase the number of APU staff. Investing in vehicles that will allow for more effective mobility can turn out to be quite cost-effective. Mobile communication sets are necessary to improve the over-all effectiveness of the APUs, especially in remote areas like Bardia and Parsa. They will help carry out operations rapidly and will also provide easy communication with headquarters when in need of extra

assistance. Since most parks have insufficient communication modes, the funds so far collected from the fines, punishments and confiscation should be utilized for the overall efficiency of anti-poaching operations.

One of the largest problems facing the APUs is that their jurisdiction is confined within the protected area borders and they are unable to pursue poachers. An APU is required whose components include the Chief Warden, District Forest Officer and regular game scouts since such an APU would have provision of law enforcement outside the protected areas. It has also been reported that wildlife species are often killed directly across the border from Chitwan, in India. Furthermore, a large number of wildlife items like tiger skin and rhino horn are smuggled through the international border between Nepal and India. These situations necessitate verbal communication between government officials from both sides in order to prevent illegal poaching and trade.

One of the priorities for the offices ought to be the coverage of medical bills, compensations for fatal injuries and general insurance for the APU staff members. Since anti-poaching operations are dependent on the tip-offs extracted by informants, it is necessary that they receive adequate pay and that they are recognized for their work. In many cases, local poachers and traffickers would never be caught if not for the work of informants. Furthermore, the reward and punishment system needs to be publicized so that the local villagers are aware of the rewards for the information leading to the capture of poachers and traffickers.

The reward and punishment system should be bolstered with an education program system so that the local villagers are given to understand the results of poaching and trafficking of wildlife species. If incentives are offered to the local villages in the form of electricity or medical supplies with some of the money collected from fines and confiscation, it might help diffuse some of their resentment for not being allowed to use Park or Reserve resources. It might also encourage them to naturally protect wildlife in the protected areas since they will have an economic interest in the preservation of wildlife species.

Along with awareness programs for the local people, total deterrence from poaching and trafficking require that anti-poaching operations include similar awareness and education packages for consumers. A public awareness campaign is required to educate the general public who are quite ignorant of conservation policies, wildlife data and the harmful effects of buying wildlife products.

As has been mentioned before, anti-poaching operations ought to be a continuous process that extends to the long term treatment of the reasons for poaching and dealing of wildlife species and parts. Anti-poaching operations will be more effective if they deal with the actual causes for poaching and trafficking as opposed to trying to stem the results. As long as trafficking of wildlife species and parts is more profitable than doing honest work, local villagers will assist poachers. Furthermore, as long as the consumer demand does not drop [due to education and awareness buildup], the dealers and traders will always post huge sums of money as reward for wildlife parts.

This report has focused primarily on the impact of anti-poaching measures on poaching and dealing of wildlife species from national parks and wildlife reserves. However, it must be pointed out that unless there are long term projects focusing on environmental education for the local people and the [international] consumers, the problem of poaching and dealing of wildlife will not disappear. Furthermore, as long as the majority of local villagers live under

the conditions of subsistence-level poverty, APUs will not be sufficient against the tide of poaching in wildlife protected areas.

V. ANNEX

i. Wildlife Conservation Organizations in Nepal

Dept. of

Forests: The Department of Forests has district offices all over the country, and is responsible for the protection of all wildlife species outside the demarcated protection areas. The department has complete legal authority to handle cases dealing with forest and wildlife issues. The district offices have collaborated with RCNP anti-poaching operations to work in Chitwan, Nawalparasi and Makawanpur districts.

DNPWC: The Department of National Parks and Wildlife was instituted in 1981 as the legal authority to look over the 13 separate protected parks and reserves. In 1988, DNPWC introduced anti-poaching units in Bardia and Chitwan with the help from WWF Nepal Program and ITNC. DNPWC has also been managing the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) for all of Nepal since 1975.

ITNC: International Trust for Nature Conservation (ITNC) provided some of the financial support for the first anti-poaching unit in Bardia and Chitwan. It has worked on several other conservation programs, providing financial support for the rewards system in Chitwan. ITNC is involved specifically on tiger monitoring and tiger surveys along with KMTNC in Chitwan.

KMTNC: King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC) is non-government and non-profit organization that focuses on research in wildlife management and the development of human resources. KMTNC funds NCRTC which is based in Sauraha, Chitwan. NCRTC's major activities focus on scientific research and monitoring, training programs and sustainable development programs. One of the projects that NCRTC runs has to do with monitoring 38 rhinoceros in Bardia which were translocated from Chitwan.

NEFEJ: The Nepal Forum for Environmental Journalists is a non-profit non-government organization formed by environmental journalists in 1986. NEFEJ seeks to educate the public on contemporary environmental issues through the use of multi-media. It also tries to reach and mobilize the various environment related departments and organizations working in Nepal. NEFEJ has several watch groups, specifically the Wildlife Watch Group which has conducted several workshops and interactive programs dealing with the protection of wildlife species in Nepal. WWG also issues wildlife reports to the media and has produced documentary films like the 1994 Rhino Census.

WWF: WWF began working to save endangered species like the Greater One-horned Rhino in Nepal in 1967. It opened the WWF Nepal Program Office in Kathmandu in 1993 since which it has funded all anti-poaching operations in the protected areas of Nepal. WWF also provides financial support for WWG and many other field action research programs.

ii. The Abraham Awards

The Abraham Conservation Award was set up in 1995 with the support of WWF- US Board member, Nancy Abraham. The Award is an attempt to give recognition to grass-roots workers who have selflessly committed themselves to the conservation of wildlife species in Nepal. The winners of the Award receive a purse of Rs. 20, 000 and a certificate outlining their outstanding contribution to nature conservation in Nepal.



Recipients of the **1998 Abraham Conservation Award** with
Jim Leape, WWF- US, Mr.N.R.Tiwari, Secretary, MoFSC
and Mingma N. Sherpa, WWF- Nepal

Recipients of the Abraham Award
[1995 - Present]

Recipient, Abraham Conservation Award	Status	Date	Location
Mr. Jha, Sushil	Game Scout	1995	RCNP
Mr. Lohani, Khadga Bahadur	Senior Game Scout	1995	RCNP
Mr. Yadav, Ram Prit	Chief Warden	1995	RCNP
Mr. Baniya, Chet Bahadur	Senior Game Scout	1996	RSNP
Mr. Banjara, Hari Prasad	Program Coordinator	1996	Environmental Camp for Conservation Awareness
Mr. Bhatta, Shiva Raj	Conservation Officer	1996	RBNP
Mr. Chunara, Gagan Singh	Senior Game Scout	1996	RBNP
Mr. Dhungana, Bal Krishna	Senior Game Scout	1996	RCNP
Ms. Gurung, Jamuna Devi	Senior Ranger	1996	Annapurna Conservation Area
Mr. Lama, Dorje	Project Officer	1996	Sagarmatha Pollution Control Committee

Mr. Shrestha, Dil Bahadur	Subedar	1996	Chitwan District Forest Office
Mr. Shrestha, Krishna	Member	1996	NEFEJ
Mr. Shrestha, Nanda Ram	DSP	1996	Police
Ms. Gurung, Jagan Suba	Women Development Assistant	1997	ACAP, Ghandruk
Mr. Gurung, Sakali	Senior Wildlife Technician	1997	West Nepal Adventure
Mr. Kumal, Sukram	Senior Wildlife Technician	1997	Long Term Tiger Monitoring Project, RCNP
Mr. Lama, Bishnu Bahadur	Chief Wildlife Technician	1997	NCRTC, Chitwan
Macchhapuchhre Development Organization		1997	Bhadaure, Tamagi VDC, Kaski
Mr. Nepal, Santosh Mani	District Forest Officer	1997	DFO Bhaktapur
Mr. Neupane, Narayan Prasad	Assistant Forest Guard	1997	DFO Chitwan
Mr. Rai, Laxman	Senior Game Scout	1997	RCNP
Mr. Thapa, Ramesh Kumar	Ranger	1997	RBNP
Ms. Adhikari, Surya		1998	Women In Environment
Mr. Gurung, Bhim	Naturalist	1998	ITNC
Mr. Lama, Lal Bahadur	Senior Game Scout	1998	PWR
Mr. Lama, Man Bahadur	Chief Wildlife Technician	1998	Bardia Conservation Program
Mr. Pandeymagar, Gobinda Bahadur	Senior Game Scout	1998	RBNP

[Table No. 6]

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Poaching Areas in RBNP

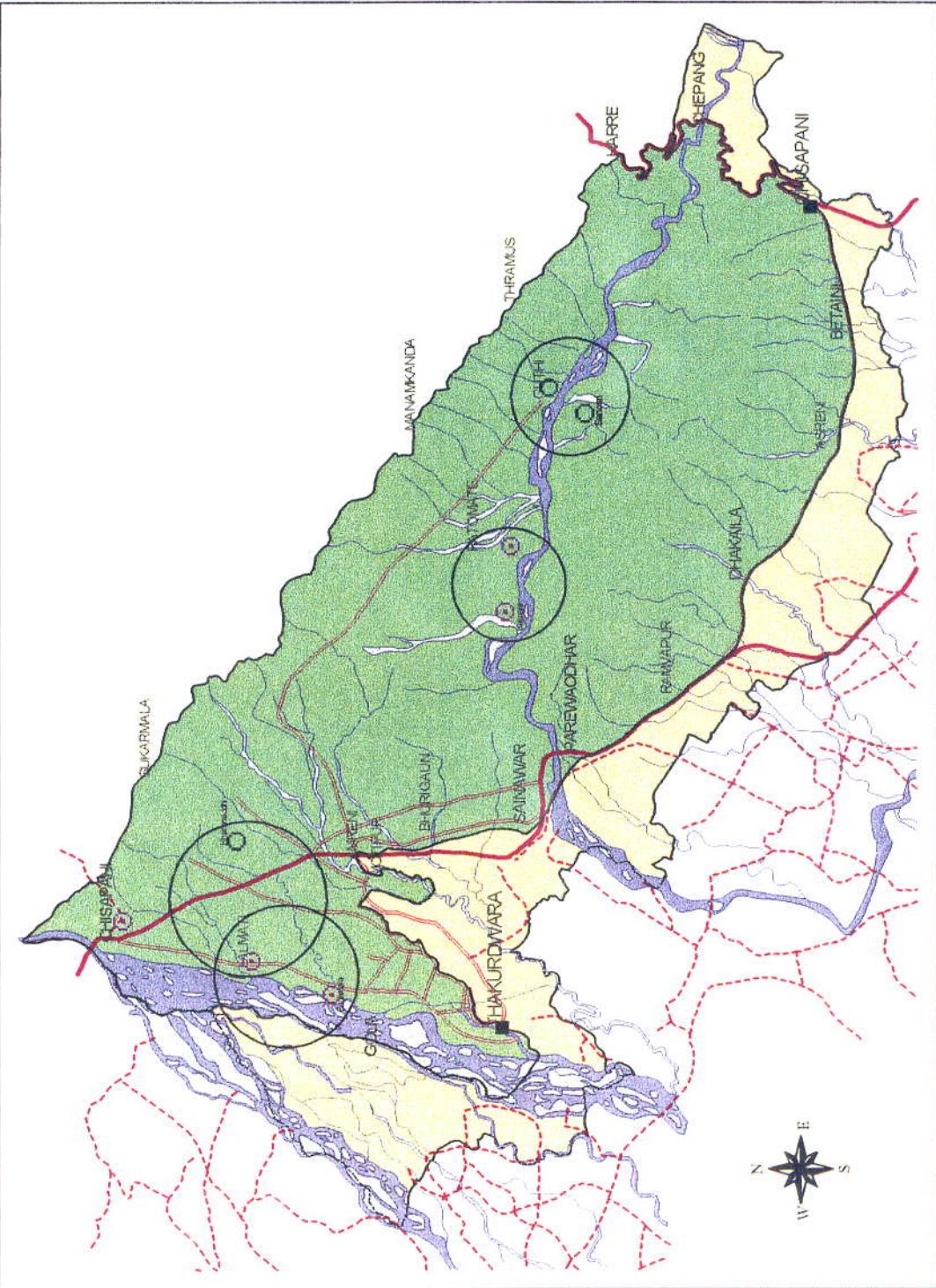


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PO Box 7660
Kathmandu, Nepal

Legend

- APU Post
- Single Poaching Incident
- Multiple Poaching Incidents
- Road
- Highway
- Road Footpath
- National Park
- Buffer Zone

(Printed on June 1998)



Black Circles Indicate Areas with Highest Concentration of Poaching Incidents

Poaching Areas in RCNP

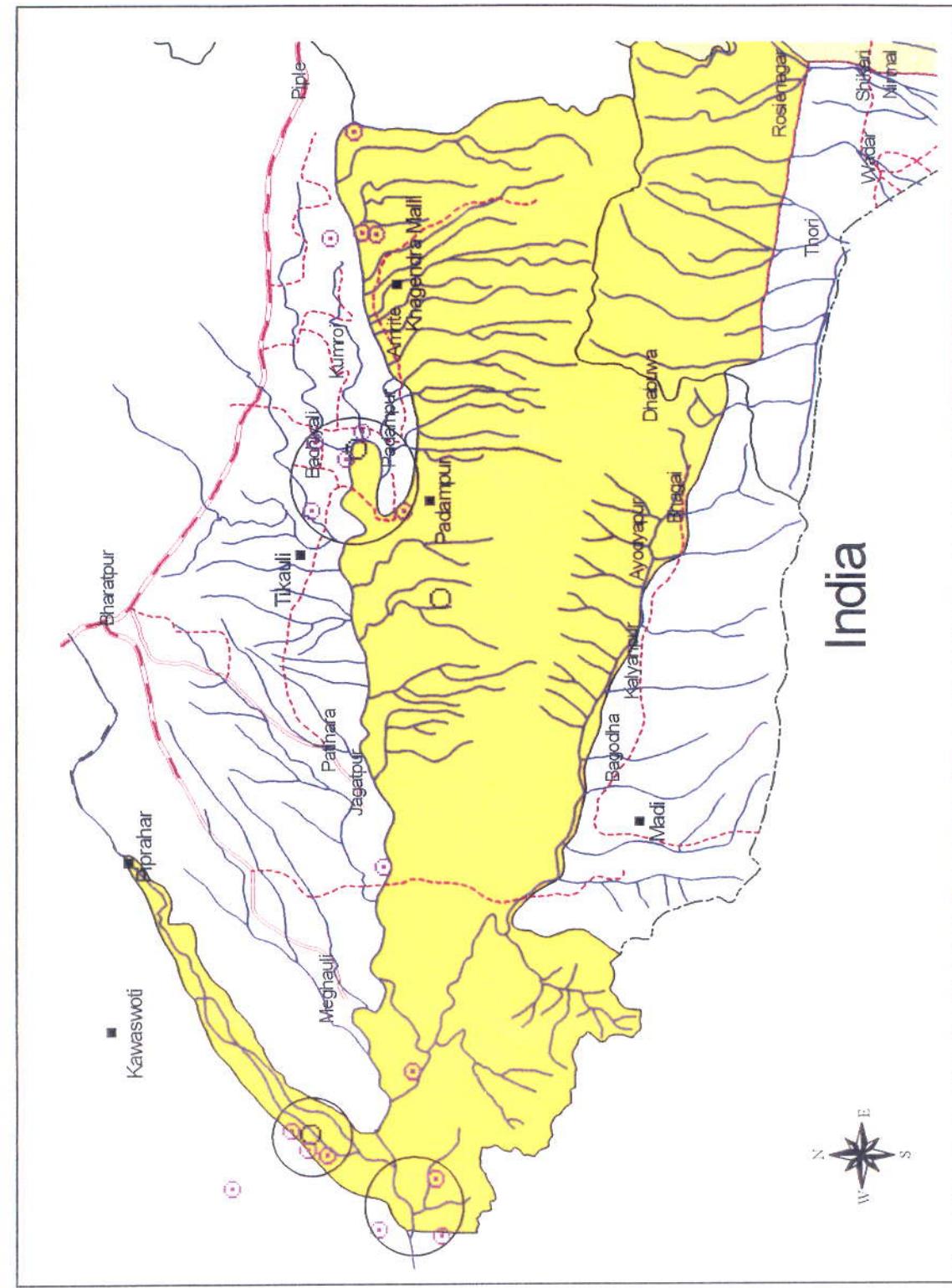


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Legend

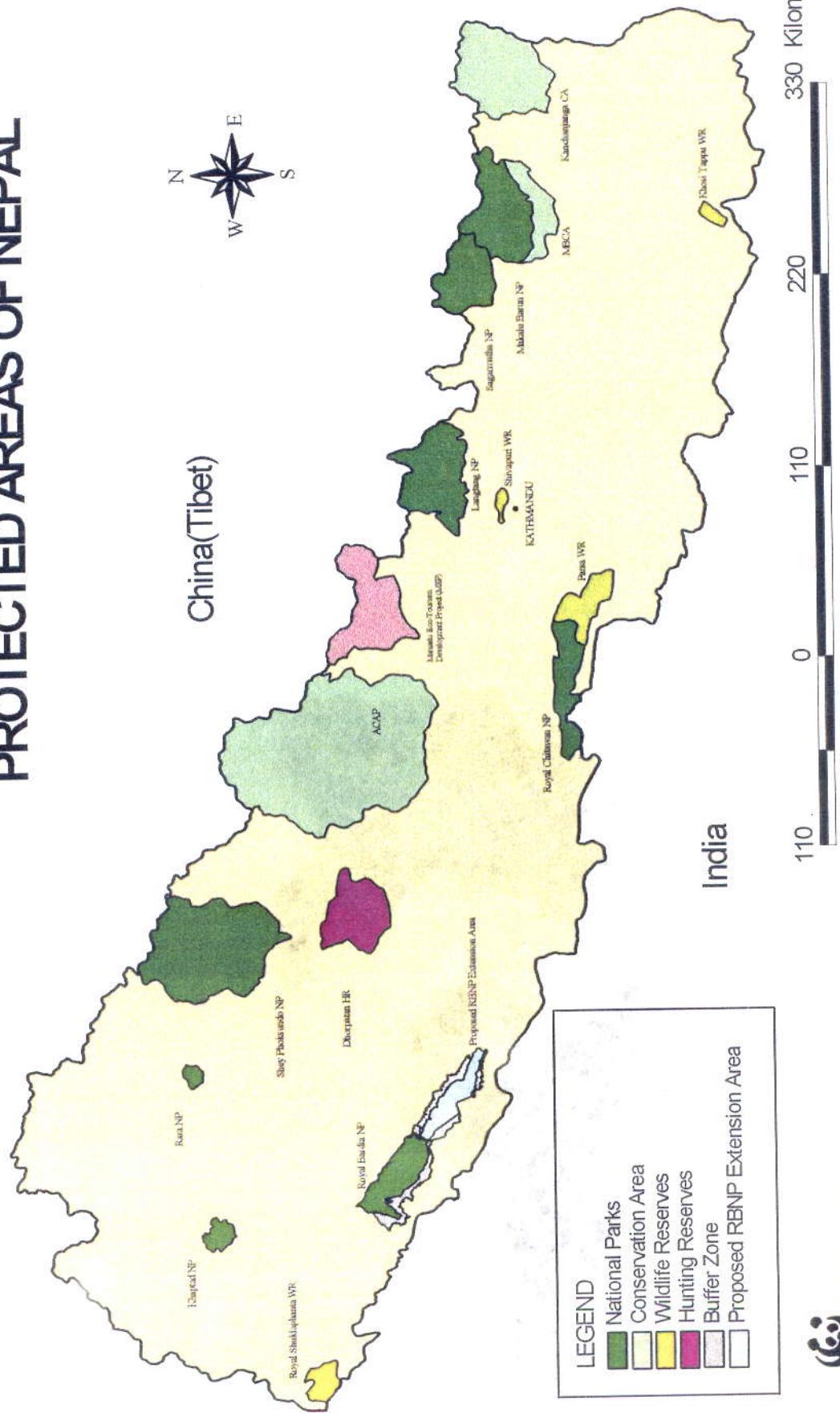
- APU Post
- Multiple Poaching Incidents
- Single Poaching Incident
- Road
- Highway
- Footpath
- Motorable
- River
- Chitwan NP

(Printed on June 1998)



Black Circles Indicate Areas with Highest Concentration of Poaching Incidents

PROTECTED AREAS OF NEPAL



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